

areas, such as the National Institutes of Health, where I would like to do a war on cancer; or the things we need to do for infrastructure in the country. Yet we have never been able to eliminate any spending.

Here is a systems approach, under my proposal, that has worked in another area, that has been key, that has produced \$65 billion in savings, that we need to take to the rest of Government.

So one of the amendments I will be putting forward is asking for the establishment of this CARFA Commission—Commission on Budgetary Accountability and Review of Federal Agencies—that will provide a list—a group on an annual basis—of programs that should be eliminated and give Congress then one vote, up or down: agree or disagree whether to eliminate this whole group or to keep the whole group.

I think that is something we need to do overall. It ought to be something we can come together on, on both sides of the aisle. I would note that in traveling across this country and talking with people, one of the big things the American public wants to see us do is get together and get something done on something that is significant to them.

One of those things is that we would be much more responsible to the Federal taxpayers as to what we are spending their money on. If we can become more responsible on that and work across the aisle and they could see Federal programs that are being eliminated because they are no longer effective or they are wasteful—and then they would actually see that taking place—I think people would then trust us more with taxpayer dollars rather than not trusting us with taxpayer dollars. If we can show them that, they would see us doing it on a bipartisan basis.

This is something for which the outcome is certainly not stacked. This is something that both sides could support as a process because we have in the past. We could finally see something starting to take place in eliminating waste, fraud, and abuse in the Federal Government. Everybody is opposed to waste, fraud, and abuse in this body—everybody. Yet it continues because the system is built to spend, it is not built to save, it is not built to reduce. We have a system that is built to save and reduce, and it is called that BRAC system in the context of military bases. Then that saved money is put into higher priority needs. Let's take that system out to the broader body of government.

This is the short period of time given to the Joint Economic Committee to talk about the impact of the overall budget on the U.S. economy. The impact of this budget that the majority is putting forward is profound and it is negative on the overall U.S. economy. I urge my colleagues to vote against it because of that.

It fails to address any sort of entitlement reform. It increases taxes at ex-

actly the wrong time. You do not need to increase taxes, I think, at any time because of the scale of taxes. But when you have a slowing economy, it is the absolute wrong time to raise taxes. The Democrat's budget also does not deal with reform of the AMT, the alternative minimum tax, which it should. It raises taxes on lower income individuals in this society and in our economy, not on upper income individuals. Again, it does have tax increase at exactly the wrong time. And it does not include things such as fundamental spending reform through a CARFA type of process we used in the military base BRAC system before.

Because of these failures of big-ticket, overarching items, this is the wrong budget at the wrong time that will have a negative impact on our overall economy. It will have a profoundly negative impact on our overall economy. It is not the right medicine of what we need to move forward. For us to grow this economy at this point in time, we need lower taxes, not higher taxes. For us to grow this economy and provide for our future, we need entitlement reform now. We also need to be able to get at our wasteful spending in the Government. We need to adjust our systems to be able to do that. Those are reforms that if we did them now—and did them at this point in time—we could have a much brighter and sustained future. This budget does not provide for those. For those reasons, I will be opposing this budget.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and reserve any time I have on the Republican side for the JEC.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MENENDEZ). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for up to 15 minutes within the time allocated for the Joint Economic Committee on the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, thank you very much.

I wish to, first of all, start my presentation today with an overarching commendation of the work of the Budget Committee and, in particular, Chairman KENT CONRAD, who worked, as he always does, along with the members of his committee from both parties who have worked very hard on this budget.

We are going to have a significant debate this week and we are doing that now and it will be fairly heated because we have broad disagreements about this budget. But I do wish to commend Chairman CONRAD and his work over many months, as he does every year, in his committee.

I wish to focus on three areas: First of all, our fiscal situation that we face now because of what has been happening in the last several years with our Federal budget; secondly, to talk about our families and the struggles so

many families are living through right now; and then, finally, to summarize very briefly some of the Democratic proposals and how they compare to the President's budget.

But I wish to start first with our fiscal situation. And I wish to thank Nathan Steinwald, who is with us, who is not only helping with getting the right chart up but also has done a lot of work on our staff to prepare us for these budget debates.

The first chart sets forth the deficit as it has taken hold over time. It starts on the far left corner, with that green bar, which starts at the year 2001, the first year of President Bush's administration. That is his first year. There was \$128 billion in surplus in his first year. I would argue that is a surplus that was left over from the prior administration.

But then you go into the 6 years after that, where we have data set forth and depicted on this chart showing the deficits since President Bush has been in office from 2002 to 2007—\$158 billion in deficit; \$378 billion in deficit; the largest deficit, \$413 billion, in 2004; it reduced somewhat to \$318 billion in 2005. It had been reduced and went down to \$162 billion last year. But then here is where we begin to get into trouble again. The projected deficit, as it is set forth in President Bush's budget: \$410 billion is a projection for 2008; for 2009, it is \$407 billion.

So we go from a surplus, when he came into office, far into deficit. Just when you think we are crawling out of it, because of his proposal—if we enacted his budget—we are going to go back into almost record deficit. You can see they are almost at the record level of \$413 billion. So that is a big problem. That chart alone is evidence to tell us we should not adopt President Bush's budget.

So let's go to the next chart, which focuses not on deficit but on debt. Unfortunately, this chart tells us even more. This is bad news. I will try to get to good news as soon as I can, but I think it is important to set forth where we have been, where we are, and where we are going. This is the debt of the United States: \$5.8 trillion—that is what the T means—in 2001, the first year of President Bush's administration. As if it were ascending steps to an unknown height, step after step after step going up, the debt number is increasing year after year after year.

So we keep borrowing under this administration ad nauseam, borrowing against our children's future. It is not just about some far off debt that this Government has put on our children—that is bad enough; that is reason enough to try to bring that number down—but we are paying for this every year, hundreds of billions of dollars in debt service right now. In 2007, we had that, and in years before that—2008, 2009. So we are paying for it now to the tune of hundreds of billions of dollars.

Here is where we will be in 2009: a debt number of \$10.4 trillion. At some